

struggling to extricate their fractured limbs from the clefts and crevices in this death-dealing Golgotha. In this situation they are quickly dispatched by the Indians and others living in the vicinity, stripped of their hides, and the carcasses left for the birds of prey. Owing to certain preservative properties in the atmosphere, animal matter does not undergo decomposition in this region with the same degree of rapidity that it does in other sections of the Atlantic States in the same parallels of latitude, and it is not unusual to see the carcasses of slain animals upon this very morass, a month or more after they have fallen, in a good state of preservation, and without emitting, in any great degree, an offensive odor.

Upon my return to Bodega, I witnessed the punishment of an Indian boy for theft. This was the case: The boy had stolen a trifling sum from the house of an American, and being shortly after detected with the money in his possession, he was sentenced to expiate his offence in a very novel manner; and here I might with great propriety use the language of Lord Byron, the scene reminded me so strongly of the main incidents of his *Mazeppa*. A wild horse that had been caught with the lasso only the day before, was brought out, and the boy's person in an upright position securely strapped to his back. The boy thus bound, the horse was then freed from re-

straint by the men that held him, and with a cut from a whip, he bounded away with the speed and swiftness of an arrow shot from a bow. The race, however, was of short duration. He had scarcely accomplished the third of a mile, when he suddenly threw himself, and with frantic efforts endeavored to roll over and over, in order to rid himself of his burden. In these struggles, one of the boy's legs was literally crushed into a bloody mass. The violent exertions of the animal had so far exhausted his strength, that he was unable to rise. In this condition, we had time to come up and liberate the boy from his bonds, but not until the poor creature had ceased to breathe. He was quite dead, and another murder was to be added to the long list of California crimes. Horror-stricken and distressed at the scene of ruthless barbarity I had just witnessed, I made my way out of the village of Bodega, wondering if the good God would permit such an unparalleled atrocity to pass unpunished.

In returning, I took the road through the valleys of Sonoma and Napa to Benicia; feeling fatigued and somewhat indisposed upon reaching the city of Benicia, I determined to rest there a day or two. Benicia contains about 1500 inhabitants, is 40 miles north-east from San Francisco, situated upon a branch of the Sacramento river. The city is regularly laid out on a gentle